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JUNE WEATHER AND CROPS

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A radio talk by J. B. Kincer, meteorologist, Weather Bureau, delivered through WRC and 42 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company during the National Farm and Home Hour, July 8, 1931. U. S. Department of Agriculture

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Rainfall during the month of June was very unevenly distributed and below normal over large areas. The Lake region, the Northeast, and the Pacific Northwest had above normal for the month in most places, but in other sections the monthly totals were deficient, markedly so in the Southeast and Northwest, especially in northwestern North Dakota and northeastern Montana where less than half the normal amount occurred. June was abnormally warm in the interior States, averaging from 5° to 9° above normal over a large section from southern Illinois, Missouri, and Oklahoma, northward to the Canadian border. At this point, it may be of interest to know that Mr. Charles D. Reed, in Charge of the Des Moines Weather Bureau Office, has found that, in Iowa, during the 58 Junes from 1873 to 1930, there were 13 with mean temperatures 2° or more above normal, and of these 11, or 85 per cent were followed by July temperatures above normal, and 12, or 92 per cent, by July rainfall below normal.

June weather, especially during the latter part of the month, was very trying to man, beast, and many crops over large sections of the country, especially in the States comprising the central valleys and the Northwest. However, a hot, dry spell could hardly have come at a better time, to cause the least amount of damage to staple crops. Winter wheat was largely too far advanced to be seriously harmed, and corn in the principal producing sections had not reached its critical stage of growth. Late spring wheat, oats, other small grains, potatoes, truck, and pastures were less fortunate, especially in the North-Central States, and these suffered considerable damage. Corn was not permanently injured in the main producing sections. In fact, it made exceptional and phenomenal growth, wherever there was sufficient soil moisture and, in general, the crop is in excellent shape at the present time and much ahead of an average season, except in some dry southern sections. In Oklahoma, corn is in a critical stage of growth, and needs moisture badly, while in many other southern localities, especially in the Southeast, the crop has been damaged by drought. Cotton, while late, continued to make mostly satisfactory growth, but moisture is needed in the northwestern Belt, especially in Oklahoma, and in the Southeast, notably in Georgia and some adjoining sections.

Rainfall for the first four months of the growing season this year, that is from the 1st of March to the end of June, has been below normal over much the greater part of the country. The Atlantic States from Virginia north have been mostly well supplied, but over the great agricultural sections between the Appalachian and Rocky Mountains, the amounts so far this year have been deficient rather generally, though not markedly below normal over considerable areas.

Compared with last year these four months had much more rainfall over a wide belt extending from the Mississippi Valley eastward to the Atlantic Ocean, where the drought then was severe. For example, Baltimore, Md. -- had for these

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four months this year, 126 per cent of normal against 78 last year; Parkersburgh, W. Va. -- 113 per cent against 53; Columbus, Ohio -- 84 compared with 42; and St. Louis, Mo. -- 73 compared with 43. On the other hand, the falls this year were less than last year in the Southeast and Northwest. --Atlanta, Ga., had 53 per cent of normal this year against 84 last year; Chattanooga, Tenn. -- 49 against 91, and for the Northwest, Moorhead, Minn. -- 60 per cent against 83 last year; and Williston, N. Dak. -- 33 this year against 77 last year.

While our summary to-day has to do largely with weather conditions for the month of June, it would not be up to date if we did not say something about what has happened during the first week in July, for this, in many ways, is the best part of the story. The week brought cooler weather and timely substantial, and very beneficial rains to a large important agricultural area, comprising Wisconsin, Minnesota, the Dakotas, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and more locally Montana. As a result of the increased moisture and lower temperatures, conditions in these States have markedly improved, especially as regards minor crops, pastures, and the later small grains in northern sections. The rains came too late to materially improve many small grain fields in the Northwest, especially the earlier crops and those on light soils. Many parts of Montana and Wyoming are unrelieved. In the Ohio Valley the rains were less general than in the States previously mentioned, but many localities had helpful amounts, and the general situation shows improvement. There are still a good many droughty spots in the Ohio Valley States. The Atlantic area, from North Carolina northward, continues mostly in good shape. In the Southeast, centering in Georgia, the drought is still largely unrelieved; it was the driest June of record in that State. Also in the Southwest, centering in Oklahoma, drought is becoming critical in many places.

A birdseye view of the country-wide moisture situation up to this morning shows the Northwestern drought largely relieved, though only locally in Montana and Wyoming; growing conditions are favorable in the central and northern trans-Mississippi States. The Ohio Valley States are irregular, with recent rains helpful in numerous places, but many other localities needing moisture. In the middle and north Atlantic sections conditions remain largely satisfactory, except for dryness in much of New York. The South is pretty dry, with a critical drought in the Southeast, centering in Georgia, and another in the Southwest, centering in Oklahoma. In the central Gulf States showers were helpful, but many localities need rain.